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THE gateway

MAGAZINE

"The Unknown"

Spring 2015
Published since November 21, 1910
Circulation 8,000
ISSN 0845-356X

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



We come to university to get answers — namely, to questions synonymous with “what do you want to be when you grow up?” But if you’re anything like me, you’ll be left with more questions than answers when you pick up your parchment at convocation — questions about yourself and the world, questions we try to remedy with catch-all clickbait quizzes and sage Thought Catalogue thinkpieces.

That big, scary *unknown* is integral to being a student, so it seems almost natural that *The Gateway* tackled this as the theme for our second magazine.

We explore this theme’s manifestations in the paranormal and extraterrestrial, from the ghosts that lurk campus buildings to the unknowns of the universe, and even spookier thoughts, like, what are we supposed to do after graduating? The pages wander between the forgotten to the philosophical, querying the probabilities of an afterlife, and lifting the untold stories of students lost to suicide.

This magazine uncovers truths that are contentious, surprising and sometimes painful to unfold — but they’re worth the trip. After all, when I was a kid digging around in my parents’ garden, I learned the coolest bugs hid under the heaviest stones.

Okay, maybe that’s a weird analogy. But, if you take away anything from this magazine, I hope it’s to replace the fear of the unknown with that childlike curiosity. Look on those scary ambiguities of adulthood through the eyes of your younger self, who still gazes at stars and checks for monsters under your bed with wide-eyed inquiry.

So, I hope you enjoy reading this as much as we enjoyed making it. Oh, and the bugs in these pages don’t bite — I promise.

Kate Black
Managing Editor 2014–15

REQUIRED READING

By JONAH ANGELES

BOOKS AND FILMS THAT DIVE INTO THE UNKNOWN — AND ARE WAY COOLER THAN THIS SEMESTER'S TEXTBOOK LISTING.

Enter the Void directed by Gaspar Noé

Entirely shot from the protagonist's point of view, the film opens up as he smokes DMT in a grungy apartment. This "psychedelic melodrama" will send you on an epic odyssey, guiding you through his psychedelic trip, whirling you through the streets of Tokyo, following the protagonist to his death, and what comes after. It's not a popcorn flick or date movie, though it may leave you with existential angst and a hankering for the nearest rom-com.

Interstellar directed by Christopher Nolan

Christopher and Jonathan Nolan worked alongside theoretical physicist Kip Thorne to explore wormholes, space travel and relativity, to bring to life a space odyssey for a new generation. With

the Earth becoming uninhabitable, humanity must find a new planet to inhabit, somewhere in the cosmos. What follows is a journey that transcends space and time, an exploration of the far reaches of the universe and the human soul itself. Do not go gentle into that good night.

It by Stephen King

With a narrative that jumps between 1958 and 1985, *It* follows seven characters as they band together against a shape-shifting, inter-dimensional being that preys on children. You may recall Tim Curry's memorable portrayal of Its human alter ego, Pennywise the clown, in the 1990s television movie. As of December 2014, a two-part big-screen adaptation has been in development, with *True Detective* director Cary Fukunaga attached to the first installment.

House of Leaves by Mark Z. Danielewski

House of Leaves is the *Inception* of literary horror: a mind-bending, psycho-

logically haunting story-within-a-story (within-a-story). It follows father and filmmaker Will Navidson as he documents his family's experience of moving into a new suburban home, ultimately discovering the house is bigger on the inside than it is on the outside. Danielewski steers clear of familiar horror elements — ghosts, demons, overly attached girlfriends — and instead employs the subtly supernatural, making a playground of the human psyche.

Neuromancer by William Gibson

If you've ever heard of the science-fiction subgenre "cyberpunk," there's a good chance you've heard of *Neuromancer*. Gibson's debut novel features computer hackers, drug culture, a gritty city in Japan and cyberspace. In today's world of social networks, Sims and Oculus Rifts, where knowledge is a google search away, multimedia is stored in clouds, and everyone and their dog carries a pocket-sized window into cyberspace, this book will blow your mind with its relevance.



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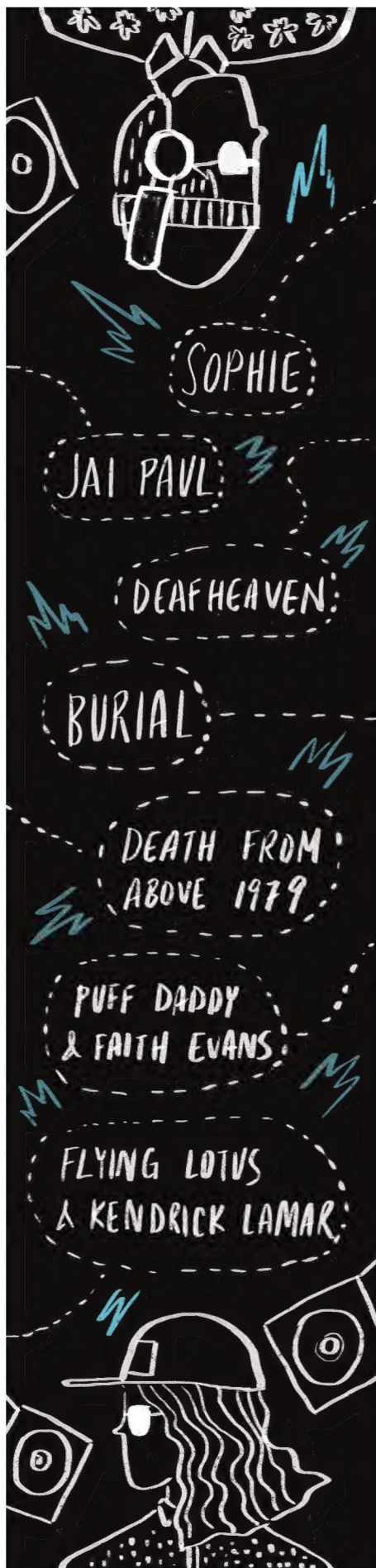
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www.mcprint.ca

11755 - 108 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5H 1B8
Phone 780-455-8885 • Fax 780-455-8882



CHEAP BEATS

BY JONATHAN ZILINSKI
ILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA HONG

AT SEEMINGLY EVERY TURN IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IS THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE UNKNOWN. WHETHER IT IS SEEN IN MYSTERIOUS ARTISTS, SAMPLES OR IN SONG-WRITING, WITHOUT A SENSE OF AMBIGUITY, MUSIC EASILY BECOMES VULNERABLE TO PREDICTABILITY. THE UNKNOWN ACTS AS A CENTRAL INSPIRATION FOR ARTISTS ACROSS GENRES IN THE FOLLOWING SONGS:

Sophie – “Lemonade/Hard”

London producer Sophie’s artistic output can be completely characterized by a question mark. His music is debated as a satire against EDM culture. “Lemonade” and “Hard” are filled with sharp turns layered over Sophie’s own twisted take on K-Pop. While his identity still remains unknown to the public, his counterculture statement is an interesting perspective.

Jai Paul – “BTSTU”

There is no present-day artist with a more frustrating career to follow. Jai initially caught the Internet’s attention with this brilliant release back in 2010. In the years past, Jai has remained predominantly out of the public eye, generating loads of hype without having an official album out. A leaked compilation of demos was illegally distributed as his debut album back in 2013 and more than a year later seemingly no one has any idea when or if an album will be released.

Deafheaven – “Sunbather”

Deafheaven’s sophomore album *Sunbather* was subject to scrutiny from the metal community for being too soft and not being “true” black metal. Regardless of whether Deafheaven is black metal, shoegaze, post rock, or any combination of the above, they still released one of the most critically acclaimed albums of 2013. The title track, “Sunbather” is one of its towering pillars — regardless of genre,

the strength and cohesiveness it provides cannot be ignored.

Burial – “Archangel”

Back when 2007’s *Untrue* was released, Burial’s identity still remained unknown. Even after coming forward as William Emmanuel Bevan, fans have still made conspiracy theories that he may actually be Four Tet. Regardless of who he is, Archangel remains Burial’s most known song to date. It’s even more impressive that such a moving piece out of mere seconds of Ray J’s “One Wish.”

Death From Above 1979 – “Trainwreck 1979”

When DFA split in 2006, the break looked to be very serious. Band members Jessie Keeler and Sebastian Grainger had disagreements on every level and weren’t on speaking terms. It was unknown to fans if we would ever hear a new DFA song ever again. However, five years after the split came the fabled Coachella reunion, and 10 years after their first album came “Trainwreck 1979.”

Puff Daddy and Faith Evans ft. 112 – “I’ll Be Missing You”

To this day, the murder of The Notorious B.I.G. remains unsolved, even though there are many theories debating who shot the blossoming hip-hop star and why. Regardless if the incident was truly part of the East vs. West Coast rivalry, the incident today still remains one of the most tragic losses in hip-hop. “I’ll Be Missing You” was recorded in the memory of Biggie, winning a Grammy along the way.

Flying Lotus ft. Kendrick Lamar – “Never Catch Me”

On his fourth studio album *You’re Dead*, Flylo explores the feelings and experiences around the great unknown of death. Kendrick Lamar taunts death on the standout track “Never Catch Me” after he comes to terms with the fact that he will eventually die. Lamar raps with a certain kind of cockiness that he will defeat death by living on through his art and everlasting legacy.

FEELIN’ ENTICED?
LISTEN TO THIS PLAYLIST AT
GTWY.CA/8TRACKS.

COSMOS IN QUESTION

BY KIERAN CHRYSLER • PHOTOS BY SPENCER NICHOLS



WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON IN THE DEEP ABYSS THAT IS SPACE?

WHILE WE MAY NOT KNOW FOR SURE, COSMOLOGISTS ARE TRYING TO FIND ANSWERS. *Are there aliens? Black holes?* COSMOLOGY STUDIES THE UNIVERSE AS A WHOLE, AND TRIES TO ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHAT'S REALLY OUT THERE.

DIMITRI POGOSYAN is a Cambridge graduate and a professor in the U of A's Department of Physics, specializing in the study of cosmology. Since he mainly studies theories of the early universe, he answered some of our questions about the vast void of space and time.

Q: *As a cosmologist, what kinds of theories do you work with?*

A: Cosmology, in principle, is the study of the universe as a whole. We study the universe on very large scales or the evolution of the universe over a period of time. On one hand, cosmologists work with theories that are provable and have an observational side, and on the other side, we push boundaries of the unknown and the ideas become mostly speculative. You have to be careful, though — if you push it too far, you stop being scientists and become science fictionists.

Q: *How was the universe born?*

A: In the early stages of the universe, it was in a very hot and dense state. At some point, the hot equilibrium that was the universe began to expand. When the



universe started to expand, it began to cool down. Structures began to form and convert into cooler bodies, and creation of the bodies in the universe we know today began.

Q: *Is there any way to know what happened before the early stages of the universe?*

A: There are areas of cosmology which study these stages preceding this hot stage of the universe. In reality, when you look very far (in the universe), you just see a uniform glowing background. It is at a temperature which is similar to that of the early universe. This is as early as we can see the light. If we go into minute features of this background, there are details that we can see from before this light from the early universe.

Q: *How do we obtain information about our universe?*

A: We can look at the sky, and in practice we see light. We look far into the universe, and we can see light that is reaching us from the past. This light can be interpreted as bodies and in theory, we can see the beginning of the universe. To some extent, our most firm basis to oversee the universe is what we see right now. We see the boundary of the universe.

Q: *Is there a lot of variance of celestial bodies in the universe?*

A: In the last 100 years we have seen that the universe is more or less similar in all directions that we look. So the idea is that the universe is homogenous, as nothing is very different from each other. Solar systems in our galaxy are not dissimilar

from solar systems in other galaxies, and our galaxy is not dissimilar from other galaxies.

The entire universe is very homogenous so if you go to other places, it will not be dissimilar from us. There are limitations on what we can see. Because the universe evolves, we find that the universe expands.

Q: *How much of the universe can we see?*

A: When we look to find the edge of the universe, there is a limit to how much light we can see. Since light travels far to our eyes, we never see the objects at the moment we are looking at them. We see them in the past. But if the past goes to some finite time, then there is a limit to how far we can see. We want to find out what is a bit further than the limit we can see.

ALBERTA UNKNOWN

BY CAMERON LEWIS • ILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA HONG

THERE'S A LOT MORE TO ALBERTA THAN CANOLA FIELDS AND MOUNTAINS — WE HAVE OUR SHARE OF SPOOKY STUFF, TOO.

WHAT'S UNDERNEATH WEST EDMONTON MALL?

West Edmonton Mall is absolutely massive. It covers 490,000 meters, has more than 800 stores, houses the world's largest indoor water park and a wealth of other attractions. So it isn't surprising that a shopping centre of such magnitude would have its fair share of mysteries attached to it.

The most common urban legend regarding the behemoth mall is what exists underneath it. Some people believe that the mall stands above a series of tunnels that connect the homes of the Ghermezian families. Others claim that the tunnels had been refortified as a bomb shelter after 9/11, while some optimists believe it's the foundation of a future LRT station.

WHAT'S THAT SOUND IN THE LA BOHEME HOTEL?

Guests at the La Boheme Bed and Breakfast hotel in Edmonton's Highland district have complained about being woken up in the middle of the night due to eerie creaking sounds and repeated thudding. These creaking and thumping noises can certainly be explained by old, worn-down infrastructure, but that doesn't explain the ghost that apparently appears in the closet. Nobody can explain the footless ghost that will suddenly chill the temperature of the room, but some believe a caretaker murdered his wife at the hotel many years ago and then proceeded to burn her body in the basement's furnace.

THE CURSE OF THE HIDDEN GOLD MINE

At the turn of the 20th century, a group of prospectors from Montana traveled to Alberta to search for gold along the North Saskatchewan River. Two members of the group traveled off on their own and allegedly found a massive haul of gold buried beneath some bedrock at the top of a mountain. The two prospectors

fought over what to do with their treasure, resulting in one killing his partner as he slept. Rumour has it the Chief of the Blackfoot Tribe overheard the spat and laid a curse on the area. Many have searched for the gold rush reported by the prospectors, but have failed and fallen victim to the curse. One prospector allegedly found the mine, but was killed when the cabin he was staying at burned to the ground. To this day, the mine has never been found.

ROOM 873 AT THE BANFF SPRINGS HOTEL

If you travel to Banff to stay at the Banff Springs Hotel, don't bother requesting room 873 — it's allegedly been sealed off after renovations and hotel management have long denied that the hotel is haunted. Legend has it long ago, a family was brutally murdered in the room, but when the police investigation was finished, the room was redecorated and opened up to guests. That didn't last long. People staying in room 873 have reported being woken up in the middle of the night to screams, flickering lights, and the sight of bloody hand prints on the walls and mirrors of the room.

FRANK SLIDE

The Albertan mining town, Frank, was home to one of the largest and deadliest landslides in Canadian history. In 1903, nearly 90 million tons of limestone slid down Turtle Mountain, crushing the mines, most of the community, and the railway into the town. More than 75 people were killed in the disaster and many of the bodies were never found. While the disaster is explainable, many people who have adventured up Turtle Mountain have claimed sights of paranormal activity. It's believed that the spirits of the families of the people who were never found still wander the mountain searching for their loved ones.

ALBERTAN CROP CIRCLES

Crop circles are a large part of popular imagination, and with a province as wide and vast as Alberta, it isn't surprising we've seen our share of massive, bizarre





patterns show up on farmland. Most crop circles can be explained as the work of pranksters, or as man made land art, but the crop circles found in Duhamel, a small hamlet outside of Camrose in the 1960s, are still unexplainable to this day. Canada's Department of National Defence investigated the phenomena but were unable to come to a conclusion. Investigators say the rings vary in size, with the smallest one being 31 feet and nine inches in diameter. There's also no evidence of tire marks, exhaust from a vehicle, or signs of human activity outside of the circles. It's suggested that it must be the work of a massive aircraft.

THE SOUND HEARD AROUND THE WORLD

From the United States to England, all the way to Conklin, Alberta, people have reported hearing a powerful, bizarre sound without a trace of origin. People from Colorado, Brazil, England and Malaysia have also reported a similar, powerful, deep, humming sound that appears to be coming from beneath them. The sound in Conklin appears to come and go, as the sound begins as something mechanical, but slowly turns into what apparently sounds like a hollow scream, or loud moan. As of right now, there's no geographical explanation for the sounds, or where they're coming from.

THE CHARLES CAMSELL HOSPITAL

The Charles Camsell Hospital, located in the west side of Edmonton, is regarded as the scariest haunted building in the city. The hospital was originally used to treat tuberculosis patients, but as the epidemic waned, it was given a new function as a general treatment hospital. Controversy surrounding the hospital suggests that the aboriginal population was terribly mistreated by staff, and that various medical experiments were conducted on patients. It's been abandoned since 1996 and residents of the area claim they can feel eyes watching them as they walk or drive by. Recently, a paranormal investigator led a team into the hospital, where they recorded what appears to be sounds of male and female voices coming from the fourth floor — which used to be a psych ward.



WICCA IN THE REAL WORLD

HOW AN “EVANGELICAL ATHEIST”
FOUND FAITH IN AN UNUSUAL PLACE.

BY RICHARD CATANGAY-LIEW
PHOTOS BY SEAN TRAYNER

SAM WAGAR ALWAYS KNEW HE HAD A RELIGION. BUT GROWING UP, HE NEVER REALLY KNEW WHAT IT WAS.

33 years ago, Wagar called himself an "evangelical atheist." He spent his 20s convincing others to denounce their "blind faith," and preaching that no god or "Supreme Being" existed. He was pleased being an atheist, and tried to persuade others to reject their religion and do the same.

But when Larry Smiley, Wagar's close friend and father figure, died in February 1982, Wagar had a "conversion experience."

Smiley's family asked Wagar to serve as a pallbearer at his Roman Catholic funeral. Despite his beliefs towards faith and religion, he accepted.

Wagar respectfully sat through the cycle of prayers and the Absolution of the dead led by the parish priest during the ceremonies. When the Catholic priest spoke about how "great it was that (Smiley) was dead so he could be with Jesus," Wagar disagreed, and thought to himself that Smiley should be there with them, instead.

After Smiley's burial, Wagar caught up with Smiley's girlfriend and reminisced on his close friend's life. It was at that moment that Wagar became aware there was still a sense of connection between him and his lost mentor, which led him to question his atheism.

"I felt that atheism was completely inadequate when it came to death," Wagar says, recalling his departure from his ideologies. "I didn't feel like (Smiley) ceased to exist. Atheism suggests that you only have relationships with people who are alive ... but I didn't feel like my relationship with (Smiley) as my friend had gone away."

While on the train home to Surrey, BC after Smiley's funeral, Wagar started writing poetry to the Mother Goddess, one principle of the great Wiccan Goddess. She is described as the Maiden, the Mother and the Crone, each representing stages of the female life cycle. He says it's hard to explain, but he felt the presence of a "comforting spiritual force that was explicitly female," and he began to explore it.

Wagar then inquired about the Wiccan religion to a friend who he knew was

a High Priestess of the Wiccan Church of Canada, who gave him Starhawk's first book, *The Spiral Dance*. Wagar then researched the rudiments of Wiccan ritual and theology. From there, "it all made sense, and continued to make sense."

Wagar related to the polytheistic stream of Wicca, which worships thousands of gods, and subsequently became a Third Degree Wiccan High Priest in 1985. The once-staunch evangelical atheist had finally found his religion.

As a high priest, Wagar turns ordinary rooms into sacred spaces by symbolically sweeping out any negative energy, then drawing a circle boundary with his finger. He assigns the elements of earth, fire, wind and water in four directions, and then calls the gods to be present with them to participate in song, chat, ritual and spells.

While in service, Wagar often goes into a "trance experience," which enables a direct connection with gods or goddesses, who come into his body, speak through his lips and take total control of his limbs.

Wicca is a decentralized religion, as many Wiccans develop their own beliefs and rituals. But although some Wiccans practice in solidarity, they all emphasize the importance of the feminine being as important as the masculine, the preservation of the environment, positive attitude towards human sexuality as a gift to the Goddess and the passage of seasons.

Wagar, who practices in a coven, hopes to spread that message at the University of Alberta where he's serving as the institution's first ever Wicca chaplain since September 2014.

The U of A Chaplains Association hosts 14 chaplains, including a Catholic, Muslim, Buddhist and Jewish chaplain. While it's typical for post-secondary institutions to accommodate "mainstream" faiths, Wagar supports a more "unknown" minority religion. In the Government of Canada's 2011 National Household Survey, only 10,225 Canadians and 1,535 Albertans identified as Wiccan.

Wagar says when he tells someone he's Wiccan, they usually try to convert him to Christianity or ask him if he worships the devil. After 30 years of acting as a Wiccan high priest, Wagar doesn't get offended when people find him and his religion odd or bizarre.

"Well, they're right," Wagar says. "Wicca is unusual in that all of our clergy people are expected to have mystical trance experiences. So yeah, that is mysterious and weird."

But "mysterious and weird" doesn't

necessarily mean evil, like the stereotypical long-nosed, pointy-hat-wearing, black-magic-performing antagonist wench that eat children in TV and fiction.

"A lot of what people think about Wicca come from fairy tales or from Disney," he says. "We're probably the only religion in the world that has the Wicked Witch of the West from *The Wizard of Oz* and Disney characters defining the notion of who we are."

"We aren't interested in cursing people and we're not based on somebody's fantasy life ... It's all a load of crap."

Wiccans also don't associate with Satan, endorse sexual assault or sacrifice cats. But they do perform rituals, such as blessing objects for protection or fertility spells for harvest growth. Some Wiccan rituals do require an athame, a double-sided knife, but not to harm — they're used as a beacon of energy in some spells. And when Wagar arrives on campus, he takes the bus — not a magical flying wooden broom.

The only symbol Wiccans hone is an upright pentagon, with each point representing earth, air, fire, water and the spirit, which ties the four elements together.

And the colour black?

"I have been told that many priestesses like to wear the colour black because it's slimming," Wagar says with a chuckle. "It's a good neutral colour and easy to work with. I have a black robe, but only because I was given one."

In addition to serving as the U of A's Wiccan Chaplain, Wagar is also the High Priest of the Congregationalist Wiccan Assembly of Alberta's Ravenwood Temple, located in Edmonton.

As a high priest and chaplain, Wagar's goals include assisting the U of A's Wiccan and Pagan community spiritually, working with other faiths and educating and informing others about the basic beliefs of Wicca.

While there is a large mainstream religion population at the U of A, Wagar has been supporting a "small group" of students, faculty and staff who ascribe to Wicca. Many of them have yet to "step out of the broom closet," and publicly declare their faith out of fear of discrimination, Wagar says. But they've been "delighted" to have a Wicca chaplain for the first time, especially if they start to question their faith, just like Wagar did 33 years ago.

"You don't want people to think you're odd when you're just trying to find your way," Wagar says. "People aren't as comfortable coming out of the closet as Wiccan. I'm here to offer that support."

MAGIC MEDICINE

REIKI STILL RAISES EYEBROWS, BUT IT'S GROWING A LOCAL GROUP OF BELIEVERS

BY COLLINS MAINA • PHOTOS BY SPENCER NICHOLS

Marianne Goestch was as skeptical as most when it came to reiki. But nearly 20 years later, she claims that it changed her life.

In the late 1990s, Goestch was in a higher management position in the corporate world, but the stress and pressures of the position led to a downward spiral into depression.

"I started to experience really high emotions, and a lot of things bothered me more," she says. "Something was wrong and I couldn't pin-point it."

A trip to Germany in 1997, though, exposed her to the benefits of reiki — a spiritual vibrational healing practice developed in Japan by Mikao Usui, in 1922. After being introduced to a reiki teacher, the conversation that ensued left Goestch in complete disbelief.

"I was wondering 'who does she think she is?'" Goestch recalls, stating that the teacher immediately sensed her doubt.

But a trip to the teacher's practice, where she received a treatment and watched others' treatment in action, led to a complete shift in her perspective.

"It was life-changing," she says. "I was astounded by the difference in how (clients) were when they came in and how they were when they left."

Following visits led to lessons for Goestch, who is now a reiki master and teacher who runs her practice from her home in northwest Edmonton. After giving up her corporate job, reiki is now her full-time job as she helps her clients cope with conditions including cancer, heart disease, chronic pain, infertility, depression and sleep issues.

She says the universe made her go in the direction of reiki, and she hasn't looked back since.

THE FOUR LEVELS OF ENERGY

According to Goestch, conventional medicine only heals the physical level of the body. Reiki, though, eases the body and mind into a highly relaxed meditation-like state, which encourages balance on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels.

By doing so, she says reiki supports wellbeing and strengthens people's natural ability to heal.

"The body is constantly in contact with all four levels," Goestch says. "Only when these four levels are in harmony is when we can heal, when we feel comfortable and when we feel healthy."

The key catalyst to achieve balance, however, is energy. Goestch says reiki stems from the concept of universal energy, which activates, releases and transforms peoples' internal energy on all four levels through a light, hands-on technique.



The body absorbs "life force" energy through the spiritual body, which then flows through the mental and emotional bodies for distribution to the physical body through the human energy centers known as "chakras," she explains.

Each chakra corresponds to certain physical systems and their related organs. Therefore unbalanced emotions, thoughts, attitudes and feelings interfere with the body's flow of energy, which could lead to decreased natural energy and immunity due to an accumulation of negative energy within the physical body.

"It's not the practitioner pushing the energy in. It is the client towing it," Goestch says, adding that reiki is a non-invasive energy practice that requires clients to direct the energy to where it is needed.

"The practitioner is really just a tool or a channel."

The energy is channelled in through a person's aura — which is the first energy interphase that bridges the physical and the spiritual levels of the body. But only the individual's body knows where to direct this energy for healing, Goestch says.

"Reiki is the same (universal) energy, but people are all different and have their own different conditions," she says. "Some people have headaches and they want me to treat their head because of the physical pain but the root of that headache may be in a different part of the body."

To align the four levels of the body, the healing practice includes a standard treatment where the practitioner places their hands in different places on, or above, the body. A standard Reiki session takes between 45 and 90 minutes, and may cost anywhere between \$50 to \$150 in Central Alberta, where the average price is around \$70.

Goestch notes that most people actually fall asleep after two or three minutes because it is so relaxing. However, Reiki still works because a client isn't supposed to do anything except relax.

“Regular Reiki treatments can lead to great results,” she says recalling one of her success-cases — a male client who was able to overcome his malignant liver cancer.

“(His doctors) said they couldn’t do much for him, which is when he came to me,” she reflects.

After pushing through his doubts, he went for his first session with Goetsch, who worked on re-building his positive attitude as she provided him with treatments.

After four months of weekly sessions, and some do-at-home treatments, Goetsch says that his following check-up revealed that his cancer had shrunk enough for it to be operable. This eventually led to two operations that took out all the liver cancer and led to her client’s full recovery.

“It is these experiences with clients that allow me to stand 100 per cent behind reiki,” Goetsch says.

A 2013 study by researchers at the McMaster Institute of Applied Radiation Sciences reveals that alternative medicine techniques such as reiki produce “very good” outcomes for patients with intractable pain and chronic illnesses.

The data found in their study suggested that alternative techniques altered the response of cells to radiation. As a result, it concluded that practices such as reiki could have therapeutic gain during radiotherapy — commonly used to treat cancer.

“This is all proven,” Goetsch says. “It is not just hocus pocus.”

SPIRITUALITY AND ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT

Donna Dux, a reiki master who runs her own practice in Wetaskiwin, AB says she’s received feedback from several people on how reiki threatens their religious beliefs. This prevents people from going for a Reiki session, making it one of the major challenges the practice faces today.

However, reiki has the potential to strengthen an individual’s connection with their religion, Goetsch explains.

“The more you develop in the spiritual way, the stronger this healing energy will get,” Goetsch says, noting that in this case “spirituality has absolutely nothing to do with religion.”

Dux points out that Reiki is more of a complementary practice than an alternative one. Alternative medicine would be something one would replace conventional medicine such as acupuncture,

osteopathy or chiropractic, she says.

“As a Reiki practitioner we would never suggest to someone to do reiki in place of medical treatment,” Dux says. “But you also don’t need to have a medical problem to receive Reiki.”

Reiki is now gaining popularity worldwide as a complementary healing practice as it is used more and more in hospitals, nursing homes and hospices.

Goetsch is part of the University of Alberta’s Complementary Alternative Research and Education (CARE) program. The program offers alternative medicinal treatment to patients at the Stollery Children’s Hospital who are participating in the Pediatric Integrative Trial.

Director of the CARE Program, Sunita Vohra said that many children in the hospital suffer from pain, anxiety, nausea, and vomiting. Despite having prescription pills to control these symptoms, these usually come with side effects such as sedation.

“Patients want the opportunity to reduce symptoms without necessarily being

asleep,” Vohra says.

This is the reason why they are studying the effectiveness of complementary therapies, such as Reiki, which have been suggested to be helpful for some of these symptoms.

“Complementary therapies are of great interest to patients,” she says. “We think good quality evidence is helpful to guide decision-making.”

The trial, which started in 2013, also treats patients by integrating the use of complementary and alternative medicine with conventional medical practices. Goetsch said that the success of the trial has resulted in even more hospital wings opening up to them in the next trial, which began on Jan. 19 2015.

She says that she would like to see conventional and alternative medicine work together in harmony within society and in health institutions.

“We need both,” Goetsch said. “We cannot just heal the physical body because we have four levels that have to be in balance to heal.”





CREEPY CAMPUS

BY SYLVIA WONG
ILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA HONG

FROM LOST GHOST CHILDREN TO LOVE-SICK NURSES, CAMPUS HISTORIAN ELLEN SCHOECK CAME ACROSS A NUMBER OF SUPERNATURAL STORIES WHILE RE-SEARCHING FOR HER BOOK, *I WAS THERE: A CENTURY OF ALUMNI STORIES ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA, 1906-2006*. HERE ARE FOUR OF HER SPOOKIEST STORIES OF THE HAUNTS THAT ROAM U OF A'S HALLS.

ATHABASCA HALL

The story of this wandering ghost, who was a little boy wearing a plaid shirt and wool pants, takes us back to the construction of this building that started in 1910. The boy's family lived by the North Saskatchewan River, as they were a part of the work camp that was building Athabasca Hall. As we all know, playing by the river can be dangerous, but the young boy didn't care. After a day of fun, he returned

home only to find out he left his jacket by the river. He went back to the river to retrieve it, and his family later found his body in the morning, frozen with blue lips. It was assumed that the father of the child buried his son near the river before fleeing Edmonton with his wife.

In 2001, an anonymous woman told *The Gateway* that her husband saw the "boy with the blue lips" wandering Athabasca Hall in the late 1940s. She recalled a boy "of about eight" with blue lips and frosty eyelashes, shivering and sobbing while looking around the ground as if he had lost something. The woman said that every year at the end of autumn, the ghost appears near Pembina Hall before running into the river valley.

POWER PLANT

Ghosts disturbed the employees at the Graduate Students' Association back in 2004, when their offices were in the Power Plant. President of the association back then, Alexis Pépin, recalls mysterious dropping of objects in rooms. She insists the rooms were empty, because all the doors were locked. Other than that, Pépin also recalled hearing someone's scurrying footsteps around the building and faulty lights. If you know a real person didn't do all these creepy things, then it must have been a ghost, right?

RING HOUSE 1

Emma Read Newton was the wife of Robert Newton, President of the U of A from 1941 to 1950 and they resided in Ring House 1 (a red brick building located on the northwest corner of the University of Alberta campus). Shoeck says the building's staff recall hearing Emma's footsteps climbing the stairs and her fondness of propping doors open and closed. The staff also know she exists when they smell cigarettes in the house, where smoking is not allowed. Emma wants your attention.

PEMBINA HALL

As a building that served as temporary lodging for the military during World War I and a hospital during flu epidemic, it isn't hard to believe that Pembina Hall has cooked up a number of ghost stories. This brings us to the ghosts of a pair of star-crossed lovers. It is rumoured that the ghost of a nurse resides in Pembina Hall, searching all these years for her lover who died during the flu pandemic.

STUDENT SUICIDE

*EXPLORING THE
REALITIES BEHIND
MENTAL HEALTH*

BY ANDREA ROSS
PHOTO BY SPENCER NICHOLS

NO ONE THOUGHT MACKENZIE PAWLUK WOULD TAKE HIS OWN LIFE.

The tall and handsome 18-year-old Sherwood Park teen was excited about recently moving out on his own. He supported himself by working long hours doing a job he loved in the sewage and drainage industry. He was self-sufficient and responsible for his age, and had just rebuilt a vehicle he bought in cash.

The youngest of three boys, he remained close with his family after moving out. He had a special bond with his baby sister, Sophie. The two were inseparable from the moment she was born seven years ago, cheek-to-cheek in every family photograph. As she grew older, Pawluk was the first to offer to babysit when his mother, Kathleen Smith, needed some alone time.

Pawluk went to his parents' place over the holidays to wish them a merry Christmas. It was the last time his mother saw him.

He committed suicide on December 30, 2014, just four days shy of his 19th birthday.

"All those things that a mother hopes their child is blessed with ... my son had that, and every opportunity possible," Smith says. "But he had a deep pain inside of him that we couldn't reach."

According to the World Health Organization, someone around the world commits suicide every 40 seconds. The Canadian Mental Health Association states suicide accounts for 24 per cent of all deaths among 15-24 year olds in Canada, and it's the second leading cause of death for Canadians between the ages of 10 and 24. Men are four times more likely to commit suicide than women.

These staggering statistics mean more to Smith than ever. A popular Edmonton blogger and a prolific Twitter user under the name @KikkiPlanet, she's used to openly discussing everything from politics to movies and food with her 15,000 followers. So when her son committed suicide, she knew she wasn't going to keep his cause of death quiet.

While families of victims of suicide often choose to mourn quietly, Smith has

since become an active participant in the discussion surrounding mental health and suicide.

"He took his own life, and there's no changing that. But it doesn't mean his life isn't worthy of being remembered," she says.

"By keeping others from talking about it, we don't have to face our own fear. I can fight for other people's kids, so that's what I'm going to do. His life will be more than something people whisper about behind their hands at parties."

Smith says her son's death was preventable if he had access to appropriate resources sooner.

The Canadian Mental Health Association says studies show more than 90 per cent of suicide victims have a diagnosable psychiatric illness. Smith's son struggled with mental health issues for years but was never able to find professional help that worked for him — either wait times for a psychologist were up to eight months (something Smith says is a "death sentence" for a suicidal person) or previously prescribed treatments didn't work for him.

She said tremendous societal pressure to succeed is a major contributor to precarious mental health in youth.

"I don't think we stop to realize the pressure that this generation is under," she says. "My generation, it's a good thing if you got a post-secondary education. For this generation, you're almost a failure if you don't. That is huge pressure on kids. We're telling them at 18 'this is it for the rest of your life.'"

Pawluk wasn't a student, but faced many of the same pressures and mental health issues many youth encounter today.

Two students died on campus during the fall 2014 semester at the University of Alberta — one student in HUB Mall in October, and another student in the Schaffer Hall residence in November. Both deaths were declared non-criminal.

U of A Dean of Students Robin Everall says there are no records kept of non-criminal deaths on campus, but when a student dies the university reaches out to the family of that student to offer support and condolences. The president will write a letter to the family, the university will provide a certificate of attendance, and if a student is very close to completing their studies, occasionally a post-humous degree will be granted in that student's name.

The university has a two-page response procedure detailing how the institution responds to a student death. But the institution won't formally and openly discuss the death of a student unless it is widely covered in the media, and won't talk about suicidal death unless the family gives them permission to do so, Everall says.

"The difficulty with that is that a lot of students then feel like we're trying to sweep the issue under the rug," she says. "We should talk about suicide prevention on campus, (but) we are being respectful of those who have lost somebody."

Everall says national college health assessment surveys show 1.2 per cent of the student population attempts suicide every year, and that eight per cent of students contemplate suicide. Because of this, the university is actively working against stigmatizing suicide and are constantly looking to improve communication with students when it comes to the topic, she adds.

"It's a difficult message to get out, that we care, we pay attention. But in times of tragedy, the most important thing is to show that we care," she says. "It's not about formal procedure and walking through the steps. It's about human compassion and reaching out in a way that's appropriate."

The Alberta government announced in 2013 the U of A, University of Calgary and University of Lethbridge would each receive \$3 million in grant funding over three years to better develop and expand campus mental health services.

In 2011, the U of A hired two community social workers to support mental health initiatives on campus. Provincial funding allowed for the hiring of four more social workers between 2012 and 2015. Over the past few years, Community Social Work Coordinator Sheena Abar says the role of campus social workers has changed from being front line workers to helping students fix mental health problems at the structural level.

Working out of a small office in HUB mall, the Community Social Work Team relies on external funding to keep the program afloat, and there's no guarantees they will be able to keep all current staff once this funding runs out.

But Abar says the quaint office has a big impact on students.

"As social workers, that's a huge piece, to make sure people have the social

support networks in place, whether that's basic needs supports or actually someone they can turn to," Abar says. "We try to keep our pulse on what students are saying and how they're feeling about things."

The team was recently working with students living in residence who were affected by the non-criminal deaths of two of their peers in the fall semester. The team focuses specifically on loneliness and isolation, and 62.5 per cent of students on campus in 2013 reported feeling extreme loneliness in the 12 months prior, Abar says.

This rings true for the many students living in residence who come from other countries.

The social work team offers training sessions for students to teach them how to support each other through the stress of university. The two-day Community Helpers Program aims to teach participants how to converse with someone experiencing a challenging situation, dealing with relationships, conflict resolution and social issues, as well as how to recognize warning signs of suicide and depression.

The program trained 175 participants between Dec. 2013 and April 2014. Between Sept. 2014 to Jan. 2015, 125 more participants were trained. Abar says she expects to see this number continue to increase as discussing mental health issues becomes less taboo in the university environment.

"It's a long change, and it can be an uphill battle in changing environments," she says. "But that doesn't mean bit by bit changes can't happen. I've seen a lot of change at the U of A over the past three years."

Continuing to foster an atmosphere of openness surrounding the discussion of mental health will be a key aspect of student support on campus in years, to come, Everall says. The training and support programs currently available are vital services for the U of A's 39,000 students, but there's still work to be done to break the stigma surrounding mental health, she says.

"It's a good sign when people are talking about it, because it means people are paying attention, taking it seriously and willing to start to do something about it," Everall says.

"It's not that tough to talk about. It's tough to lose people ... that's the tough part."

LOVE THY

Strathcona, Westmount, Garneau, Oliver, and Highlands — these Edmonton communities win a spot on Avenue Edmonton magazine's "Top Ten Neighbourhoods" list every year. But have you ever heard someone say that they're going for a drive to see the houses in Inglewood or the churches in McCauley? Or how often do you hear someone say that they'd love to live in the French Quarter? Whether you have or you haven't, we need to start discussing and exploring these underdogs more.

The lesser-known neighbourhoods of Edmonton typically come up in conversation for two reasons: a landmark or their crime rates. Inglewood and McCauley tend to be monthly targets of crime, while McKernan and the French Quarter are primarily recognized for the LRT station and Campus Saint-Jean, respectively.

But walking through Inglewood, one gets to see post-WWII homes, each with their own whimsical character. As for visiting McCauley, one would need to set aside at least half their day to fully



'HOOD

PHOTOS BY
KEVIN SCHENK & CHRISTINA VARVIS

appreciate the culture that this area boasts — a walk through the Historical Street of Churches is a must in every season. The French Quarter is grounded by La Cité Francophone, a grand centre with a farmers market, and several other businesses, including the popular Café Bicyclette. Lastly, McKernan is a beautiful, mostly residential neighbourhood that harbours surprises both in its history and present. For instance, before the 1940s, the neighbourhood flowed around McKernan Lake and was one of the Toonerville Trolley's

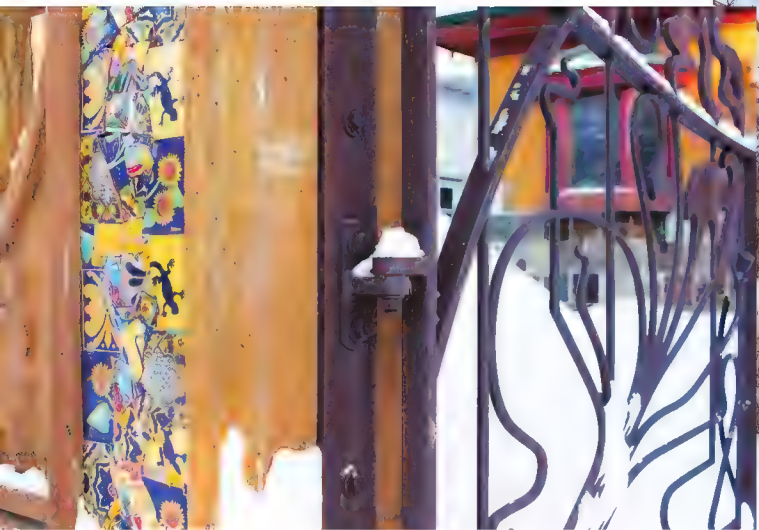
destinations. Today, it offers a peaceful and manicured community park, a convenient barbershop, and an even more convenient pizzeria, all that give it a sense of home — even if you don't live there.

Viewing these neighbourhoods in the way that a tourist would will save them during this time where Edmonton is seeking a new, urban face. They have been a valuable and significant part of the city in the past, and should be able to continue that reputation for many years and generations to come.

INGLEWOOD

The supposedly haunted Charles Camsell Hospital barricaded with chain wire and knitted hearts.







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

INGLEWOOD One of the few schools in the city that retains its retro style.

MCCAULEY Year-round summer and cappuccinos.

MCCAULEY Window stickers adorn the Cornerstone New Testament Church of God.

MCCAULEY The Ansgar Danish Lutheran Church brings European flair to McCauley.

INGLEWOOD Glimpse of the artistic side to Inglewood.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

MCKERNAN Barbershop and pizza are two of the few businesses in McKernan.

FRENCH QUARTER A painting weathers the cold outside the French art gallery.

MCKERNAN A small gazebo stands out in the McKernan public garden.

FRENCH QUARTER Shops and even a farmer's market reside inside La Cité Francophone.

MCKERNAN The McKernan/Belgravia LRT station keeps the community connected.

FRENCH QUARTER A mural adorns a bright yellow wall beside a closed drugstore.

BACHELORS IN PANIC

NAVIGATING POST-SECONDARY WHEN AN UNCERTAIN JOB MARKET LIES AHEAD

BY ANDREW JEFFREY

When Ruslan Bergenov was 15 years old, his high school English teacher told him he was a promising kid with a bright future.

10 years later, Bergenov woke up and took a long, hard look at his life. He'd spent his entire adult life so far studying education, but hadn't embarked on a career of his own yet. At 25 years old, he still saw himself as just what his English teacher had called him: a promising student, but nothing more. It was at this moment that Bergenov's slow loss of his professional identity truly began.

"Between the ages of 18 and 25, I had always identified myself as a teacher," Bergenov says. "Then I sort of lost this identity and it's hard, especially if you're not from here, if you're an international student."

Bergenov, a native of Yekaterinburg, Russia, experienced this early identity crisis before he had even finished his education. In Russia, he studied to be a teacher from 2004 to 2009, and came to the University of Alberta in 2012 to complete its two-year advanced linguistics Master's program. The plan was to obtain his masters and PhD on his way to eventually working as a professor.

"This is when my quarter-life crisis started," Bergenov says. "This is when I lost my professional identity."

Education had been Bergenov's passion for years. He travelled away from home in 2011 to teach Russian in the United States before continuing his studies in Canada. But the difficult job market teachers face in the current economy and the U of A's own financial struggles discouraged Bergenov from continuing this pursuit.

In 2012, when he started his Master's program, he saw the U of A going through budget cuts, and began noticing that the labour market in academia was only going to get worse.

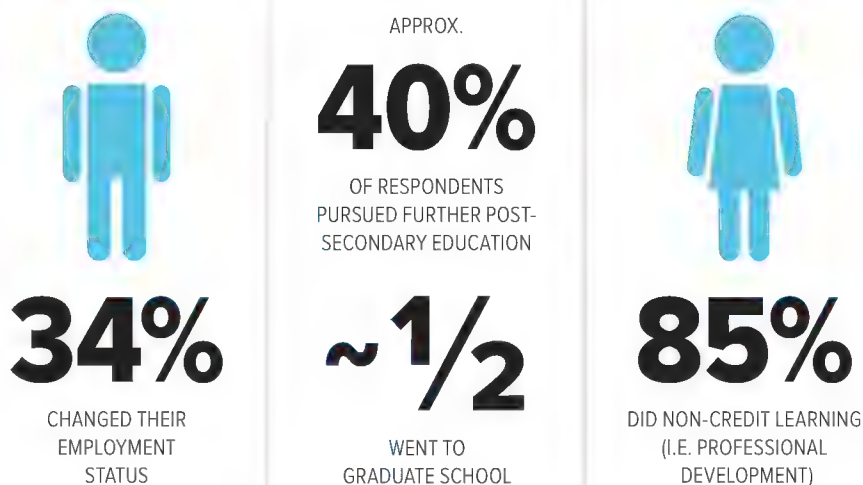
"So I thought 'I need to change my occupation.' Not just get a job, but change my occupation. I need to change my professional identity, because I lost that

previous identity," he says.

Bergenov researched a variety of different career paths and settled on marketing his new pursuit. But though he's found that he loves working with numbers, his new career path is a far cry from what he originally expected for himself and what he originally thought he wanted when he was younger. Now, he works as a digital asset management intern in the U of A's Office of Advancement, conducting

Overall, the current unemployment rate in Canada is slowly going down. In January 2015, it dropped to 6.6 per cent, with Alberta specifically experiencing a small upswing in employment. Finding work, though, doing exactly what a student had always envisioned and dreamed for themselves is still a challenge. But no university student needs to see any statistic to understand how difficult job prospects can be.

UALBERTA CLASS OF 2005: BETWEEN 2005–2010



research to find potential donors among the university's alumni — far from any classroom work.

Bergenov says it's common for students to feel stress, anxiety and even depression — not just about academic demands and expectations, but stress when faced with the question of what to do next once the safety net of returning to university every September is gone.

"You feel anxious when you just do your degree and you know there's no jobs in your degree," Bergenov says. "Most graduate students who do masters or PhDs in humanities, they're very anxious because they're just afraid you graduate and you become unemployed, or you'll end up doing a job in some mall, some job you don't need to have a degree for."

The service on campus that helps guide students through these problems most often is CAPS, the U of A's career centre. The service helps students prepare for their first job interviews, put together a resume, find job shadowing opportunities and career mentors, and even critique students' LinkedIn pages.

CAPS Career Education Manager Blessie Mathew says stereotypes persist that it's difficult to find a career after pursuing different degrees, like Philosophy or English, that don't have a clear application in today's job market. But Mathew says the job market is more inaccessible for a variety of students than that stereotype indicates.

"We're kind of in a spot in the economy now where there's not one profession

that's really, really suffering," Mathew says. "If you take nursing for instance, that's one that's not-so-easy at times to find work. Those students are really left trying to find alternative ways to apply their degree ... For education students in particular, we have a whole suite of resources for other ways to apply that degree, and it's the same thing for nursing."

CAPS helped Bergenov find a new career path after he stopped pursuing education by setting him up with job shadowing and career mentoring services. Mathew says they often see students come into their office with similar career crises to what Bergenov experienced.

The effects of these crises can go deeper than just stress or anxiety about the future. Even though CAPS isn't equipped for personal counselling services, Mathew says the service often sees the students showing signs of depression.

"The stress of school, the anxiety of a transition and the rejection you can sometimes face in your work search can really snowball into terrible things sometimes for students," Matthew says.

While it's naturally seen as a time for celebration, volunteers at the Peer Support Centre, an emotional support service on campus, are well aware that graduation also presents a loss to students moving on from their studies and from the routine they've grown accustomed to.

"That can be really overwhelming and (students) can grieve that loss, and a lot of people really don't associate a loss and grieving with graduating," says Peer Support Centre Program Manager, Katie Allan.

Individual ideas of success may differ, but the trials and tribulations of entering into the job market is troubling to every student, regardless of what they graduate with. In Matthew's experience at CAPS, she says she's seen periods of time where even fields thought to be as lucrative as engineering go through hard times for students and young

aspiring workers.

The best students can do for themselves, she says, is make themselves fully aware of every way their degree can be applied to work in the job market, even outside of their traditional expectations. She also suggests finding as many opportunities as they can to gain experience working outside of the usual hours they spend on schoolwork.

"The more prepared student will have gotten involved in multiple activities during university that allows them to combine and leverage their skills in unique ways. If they can recognize that and communicate that to employers, that automatically opens up options that aren't available to their fellow student," she says.

This was exactly the situation Bergenov found himself in nearly three years ago. But, he was lucky to not only find another career path to follow, but to find a new passion, a new line of work that he truly enjoys.

From Bergenov's perspective, though, this just means that there's more prospective U of A students should keep in mind the reality of their career prospects when they're applying for school and prepare themselves for future setbacks.

"The best way to find something that you like is to do it. And when you start doing it, you're going to fail, maybe a few times," Bergenov says. "Find something that you really like, but at the same time, make sure that it's in demand on the job market."

It's simple advice, but there's not much more a student can tell themselves when deciding what path they want to take their education and their future career.

There's no secret to solving this mystery. Even when you think you have your future all figured out, like Bergenov had hoped, any student — regardless of faculty or year of study — could still find themselves in a new career miles away from what they'd ever expected for themselves.

6 MONTHS

AFTER GRADUATING

83%

OF RESPONDENTS WERE EMPLOYED

8%

WERE UNEMPLOYED

9%

WERE NOT WORKING
& NOT LOOKING FOR WORK

5 YEARS

AFTER GRADUATING

95%

OF RESPONDENTS WERE EMPLOYED

1.5%

WERE UNEMPLOYED

3.5%

WERE NOT WORKING
& NOT LOOKING FOR WORK

STATS TAKEN FROM CAPS GRADUATE
EMPLOYMENT SURVEY OF U OF A
GRADUATES OF 2005

AFTERLIFE

ASKED & ANSWERED

INTERVIEW & PHOTOS BY
CHRISTINA VARVIS

The U of A Chaplains Association offers spiritual guidance and support to 14 different religions. We spoke to three chaplains on one of the greatest unknowns out there: what happens after we die?



MATTHUMAGALA CHANDANANDA,
BUDDHIST CHAPLAIN AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Q: *How do you define death?*

A: In Buddhism, death is twofold: one is momentary death, another one is conventional death. To understand this momentary death, Lord Buddha, the awakened one, invited us to see that everything in the universe is flickering, just as fluorescent lights flicker about 120 times per second. Our train of consciousness also flickers at a much faster speed. Therefore, in every moment, we take birth and suffer death. On the other hand, conventional

death is a kind of illusion. Due to aging or a sickness, a time comes when this flickering train of consciousness cannot be supported by this body any longer.

Q: *Do you believe that there is a life after death for humans — an afterlife?*

A: I do not believe in a life after death. I have begun to see that the conventional death could not be the end of this train of consciousness. If we explore what happens in this particular moment, we will be able to understand what happens after death. We always try to sort of fantasize, to live in the future or in the past, and we come to some confused state. Unless you explore what happens in this particular moment with mindfulness, it is unlikely that you can understand what really happens after the point of death.

Q: *Do you think that humans, after passing away, could return to this life?*

A: Yes, it can happen and as some studies suggest, some people can even remember their past lives. I think this concept can also explain why we sometimes feel a great sense of belongingness or aversion with some people, even at the very first sight.

Q: *What are your thoughts on near-death experiences? Can they be seen as verification of life after death?*

A: Some of those experiences like seeing a divine abode or darkness can be indicators of their next dwelling, while many

other observations might not be worth anything more than hallucinations. But one very important point in Buddhism is, the heavenly life and hell life is not eternal. There is nothing eternal in Buddhism.

Q: *Are you afraid of dying and do you think about it often?*

A: With my practice of meditation, I think about death quite often and I am becoming increasingly less and less afraid of death. I am afraid of being born again, because when we sign up for a new life, we also sign up for an untold amount of suffering. I have seen that when I'm not mindful, I'm afraid of death.

RICHARD REIMER, LUTHERAN
CHAPLAIN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

Q: *How do you define death?*

A: Well, physical death is defined medically as the cessation of brain activity. But there's another kind of death I think, and that is a kind of soul death. We lose the spirit of living and in that sense, maybe it's a consequence of being beaten down, giving up, or giving ourselves over to destructive impulses, powers.

Q: *Do you believe that there is a life after death for people — an afterlife?*

A: Yes, but I don't see it as a discontinuance. If heaven isn't about some other place, but it's about a dimension of here and now, then what I believe is that there is a continuity between that heaven that we experience now and the life to come or the afterlife. The way some persons have described it is that we move from the near presence of God to the nearer presence of God.

Q: *Do you think that people, after passing away, could return to this life?*

A: I believe in the resurrection of a body. Christians too often have been characterized as believing in the immortality of the soul. But no, Christians are grounded in the Hebrew story where God animates a body and that body is God's good creation. But reincarnation, that's more of the platonic to me. I know some people that believe that, but I don't.

Q: *What are your thoughts on near-death experiences? Can they be seen as a*

verification of life after death?

A: I don't see them as proof if you will of life after death. To me, the proof is in the walk that I'm on already. It's in my experience of God in the present, and my conviction, my faith that's not going to cease, that's only going to continue in a more fully realized way. The proof is in the lived experience, day to day.

Q: *Are you afraid of dying and do you think about it often?*

A: I think, to be honest, I'm afraid of dying painfully. I was diagnosed with stage-four lung cancer five years ago and why I'm still here is a kind of mystery. I just had my 65th round of chemotherapy. I think that really the big fear to overcome is the fear of really living, and by that I mean having the courage to engage the things that my faith calls me to engage. I'm consumed with engaging in this life, and a big part of that is my faith, because I don't see heaven as divorced from this life. Heaven isn't an escape patch. It's a dimension of this life and we can join Jesus in celebrating the goodness of creation and grieve the ways in which it's broken, and be part of His work to redeem it.

SHELBY HAQUE, MUSLIM CHAPLAIN AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Q: *How do you define death?*

A: Death, from a physiological point of view, is when the processes of life stop at a cellular level. But the Prophet of Muhammad said, when people die, they wake up. In other words, it's the start of what we would consider the real life or the life of eternity.

Q: *Do you believe that there is a life after death for humans — an afterlife?*

A: Yeah, without doubt. From the Muslim point of view, there absolutely is a life after death, and that life begins from the moment you go into the grave, in fact. The life of this world is described as play and amusement, but when the life of the hereafter comes, that's the real life. It's eternal life.

Q: *Do you think that humans, after passing away, could return to this life?*

A: In the Quran, there are specific verses that mention that people will die and they



will see the punishment and they'll ask God to come back to Earth just even for a moment so that they could just do some good deed, that they could come to the Day of Judgement with some good deed, and they won't be allowed to do that. You get one chance. You either use it or you lose it.

Q: *What are your thoughts on near death experiences and can they be seen as verification of a life after death?*


A: I don't know that it's a verification or a refutation for life after death, but I do believe that there are multiple ways of perceiving the world and that we only sort of know about, or we're only kind of consciously aware of certain of them.

Maybe there is some other way of perceiving, like there's things that we could perceive about the world that we can't actually physically see.

Q: *Are you afraid of dying and do you think about it often?*

A: I'll be honest with you — I think about death all the time. I work as an emergency room physician, so I see death and I deal with families who have to deal with the death of loved ones, and that's what I do for a living, both for my job as a chaplain and my job as a physician. I don't know if I'm afraid of death. I mean, obviously you love the people that you've left behind, but I always try to live my life in a way that I have no regrets.





APOCALYPSE BOOK CLUB

"PAY UP."

Wade chuckles. "Can I sit down first?" He joins Martha on the bench. Last-minute holiday shoppers have flooded West Edmonton Mall. "Bought you a coffee." At twenty-six years of age, Wade has firmly entrenched himself in caffeine addiction.

Martha removes the lid and sets the cup down beside her. She pulls a packet of sugar from her purse. "Thanks. I'll take it off of what you owe me. Now it's only \$1,999,997."

"Is that all?" Wade removes his coat. "Double or nothing?"

"Of course," says Martha. "How will the world end this week?"

"Climate change," says Wade.

Martha swirls her coffee to mix in the sugar. "That's a pretty boring suggestion for you. Usually it's robots or alien overlords. You sure climate change?"

"Pretty sure."

"Okay," says Martha. "Hope you're ready to pay me four million next Sunday."

"If the world's still here," says Wade. They cheers. Wade eyes the crutches Martha has tucked under the bench. "How's the leg? I could have picked you up, you know. You don't have to take the bus to meet me here." He doesn't know much about the accident, but he knows her femur took the worst of it and he knows it's pretty bad.

When Wade first met Martha, she was hobbling on her crutches along the path to the community hall where they were about to attend their first book club meeting. Ice, dotted with salt, coated the pavement. Martha refused to let Wade help her

into the building. A wounded elk came to mind: sturdy build, dark eyes, tentative motion.

Martha shrugs. "Don't worry about me," she says. "The world is going to end this week anyway, remember?" She pauses for a moment as a woman laden with shopping bags drags her young, jam-covered daughter into Bath & Body Works. "Have you told Kim yet?" asks Martha.

"She doesn't care much for speculating about the apocalypse," says Wade.

"Not about that," says Martha. "I mean have you told her about this — that you're not really going to book club every week?"

"No. Not yet." He knows where she is taking this.

"We're just talking, Wade. There's no shame in making friends."

In the four years since he began dating Kim, Wade had never known her to "just talk."

"She wouldn't understand, okay? You're younger and— I don't know — female."

"I'm four years younger than you," says Martha. "It's not that weird."

"How about you? Have you told your ski chums about me?" he says.

"You're deflecting."

"So are you."

Martha sighs, frustrated. "Fine. No, I haven't told my ski chums about you because you're an unemployed accountant and there is nothing about that that's not boring. I'm also not living with them."

Wade takes a deep swig of his coffee. The cup is nearly



BY CHARLOTTE CRANSTON

ILLUSTRATED BY JESSICA HONG

empty.

"You do realize you're going to have a heart attack before you're thirty if you keep drinking all that caffeine," says Martha.

Wade appreciates the change in conversation. He leans back a little as he gulps the rest of his drink. "Bring it on," he says, smirking. "When I'm in heaven I'll get myself a never-ending fountain of coffee, have another heart attack, and go to a better heaven with better coffee."

He seems younger when he jokes like this. Martha notices how lanky he is beneath his grey-collared shirts —like a teenage boy wearing his father's clothes. She chuckles. "All the wonders of the universe at your fingertips and you choose a fountain."

"What would you want?" says Wade. "If you could choose your heaven?"

"Choose Your Heaven!" roars Martha in her best game-show voice. "One lucky winner will get all of time and space, coming up right after these messages."

A couple passersby flash Martha a look. She winks at one of them, a professional sort of man, and he quickly looks away. Wade laughs.

"Anyway," says Martha, "I try not to get my hopes up after-life-wise. It's a cute bedtime story and everything, but I'd rather focus on what's going on down here."

"Seriously?" says Wade. "You don't believe anything comes after this?"

"No. When I die I'll be dirt and so will you."

"I disagree. If there's nothing else, then life doesn't mean anything."

"Life means whatever meaning you give it." Martha adjusts her injured leg. "If you're going to get upset about it we can

drop it."

"I'm not upset," says Wade. "I'm just curious about your reasoning." He has lost that boyish look.

"People like you spend way too much time trying to figure out the next step in life," says Martha. "It's a waste of time, trying to figure out the meaning of life, the meaning of death."

"People like me?"

"People like you. Predictable, think-inside-the-box university grads waiting for things to fall into place."

Martha can sense that she has said something wrong. Wade's smile fades and he furrows his brow in the same way he did when they first met, right before the argument. "You've known me for four weeks, Martha. You don't get to decide how I live my life."

"I'm not trying to!" She stares at him, incredulous, then frustrated. "Calm down, Wade. You asked me a question and I answered. I'm sorry if you don't like it, but that's what I think."

Wade leans forward, resting his elbows on his thighs. Somehow this irks Martha even further; she hates when he shuts down like this. She knows she shouldn't push the subject, but her mouth gets the better of her.

"Why can't some things be left unknown?" she continues. "We should just enjoy life without having to search for some higher purpose. You, everyone, you have this obsession with what comes next and it's crap. Why bother? What is the point?"

Wade stares at a mark on the floor. "Kim is pregnant." He exhales slowly like a balloon deflating, crumpling. "That has to mean something."

Martha watches a group of teenagers weave past a slow-walking elderly couple. Her mouth is suddenly dry. She sips her



coffee and asks softly, "How long...?"

Wade sits back up. "We found out yesterday. I guess I'm a bit on edge. I'm sorry for snapping at you like that. She's only a few weeks. We're not telling anyone yet, we want to be sure."

"So that's it then," says Martha. "No more book club."

"Who says?"

"Your baby says. You're going to have a kid. You can't hang around your apartment anymore, you'll need a job. I assume Kim is going to want to get a house, probably in Sherwood Park or Terwillegar or some other fancy suburb, and —"

Wade interrupts, exhausted. "Does everything have to be an argument with you?"

"We wouldn't be here if we didn't argue," says Martha.

When Martha met Wade she knew right away she didn't like him. He wore one of those double-breasted jackets that men wore pretentiously Downtown or along Whyte Ave.

"Do you remember their faces?" says Wade, a grin beginning to twitch at the corner of his mouth. "All those old book-club ladies must have been horrified by us."

Martha giggles. "That one lady with the cat purse looked like she was about to have a stroke when you started shouting."

"And then you stole all their sugar packets on the way out...."

"They were right there!" exclaims Martha in a playfully defensive tone. "They had the whole tea set out and nobody was drinking it."

"No wonder they didn't invite us back."

"I don't think we weren't invited back because of the sugar," says Martha with a laugh. "I think we weren't invited back because you wouldn't shut up about the apocalypse."

"The book was about the apocalypse." Wade had read it in

a day. Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*. He was surprised by how much he enjoyed it.

"Really?" says Martha.

"You didn't read it?"

They look at each other and then both laugh. Wade feels relieved to laugh with his friend. She is gentler when she is smiling.

"I'm impressed. You argued very well for someone who had no idea what she was talking about. Why would you join a book club and not read the book?" he asks.

"I was bored, I guess. I'd just gotten out of the hospital and I couldn't ski anymore so I thought I'd try something new. I didn't think they'd be so uptight about it."

"Well. I'm glad we decided to do this instead," says Wade. They cheers again with empty cups.

"You could babysit," says Wade.

"That would require you telling Kim I exist," says Martha pointedly.

"I will. Eventually."

"I hate being a dirty little secret. It's weird."

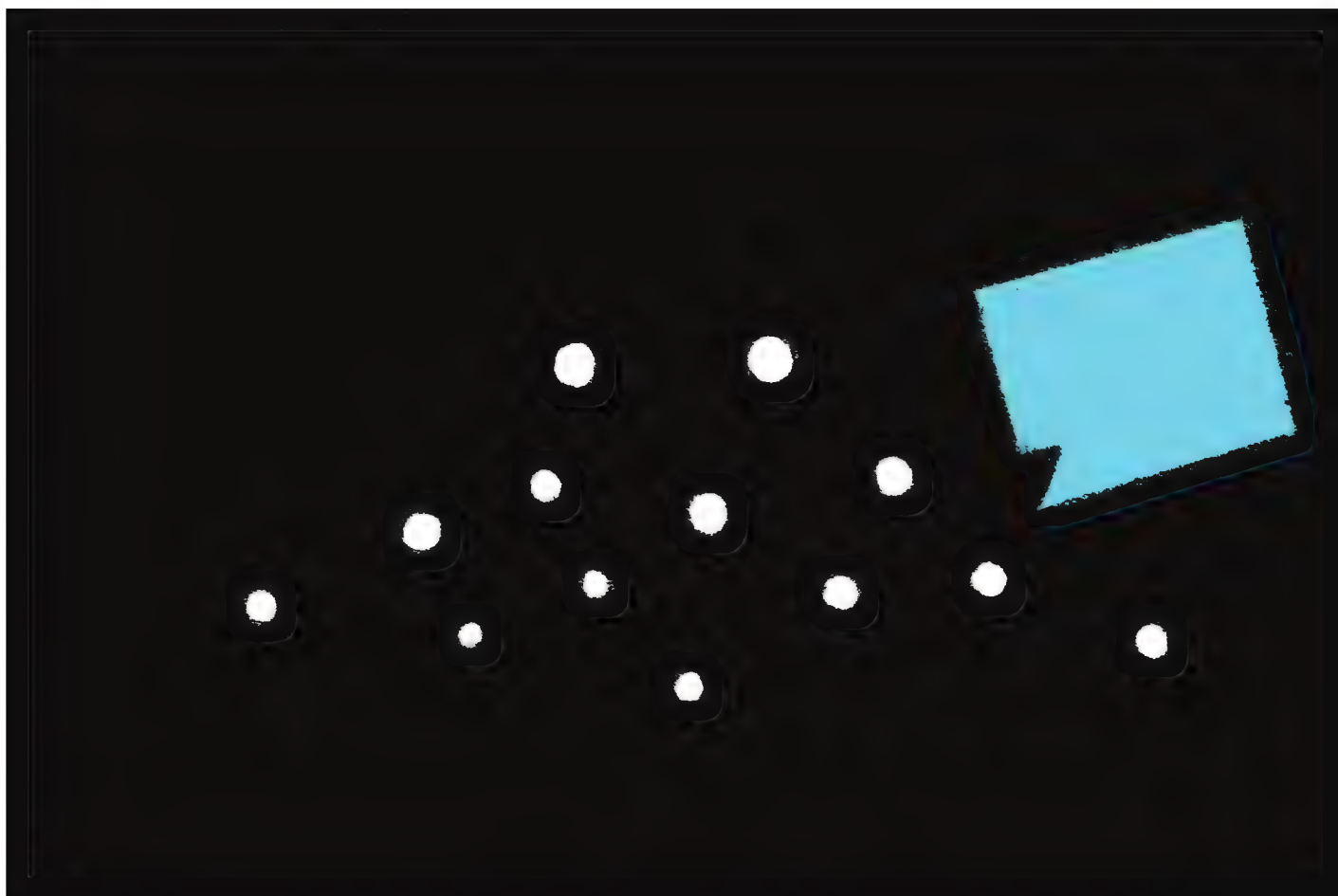
"You're not a dirty little secret," says Wade. He places a hand on her shoulder. "I just have to figure out what to say."

Martha shakes his hand from her shoulder. "Say you got kicked out of book club for being an obnoxious ass and now you go to the mall instead to be an obnoxious ass where nobody will mind. And to gamble away all of your money betting double-or-nothing on whether the world will end this week."

"I wouldn't have acted like an ass if you hadn't provoked me."

"Uh huh."

Wade picks at the cardboard sleeve on his coffee cup. "Kim



doesn't see things the way you do. If I tell her I go to the mall every week to meet with a younger woman she'll think it's something it's not. With everything that's happening with the baby, the stress of it — I just don't want her to get hurt."

Martha bristles. "You know what that is? It's an excuse," she says. "Anyone with eyes can see we're just friends. If you don't want to do this anymore that's fine, but don't place the blame on your girlfriend."

"This is harder on me than it is on you, Martha. You might be the only real friend I have. At least you have other people in your life to talk to, to hang out with. Me? I have an accounting degree, a tiny apartment, and a pregnant girlfriend I'm not even sure I love."

The word love tastes foreign in Wade's mouth. He has used it before, but only as a syllable, never as a concept. He used it when it was fashionable to do so. Today it bears meaning, consequence, weight.

"I don't have friends either, Wade. Until I met you I'd never had a conversation that lasted longer than a chairlift." Martha hesitates, considers whether she should trust him with the secret she's been hiding for the last month. "Do you know how many people came to visit me in the hospital when I broke my femur? None. They never even apologized for putting me in a car with a drunk driver."

It's strange, feeling her words hang in the air after so many weeks of going over this conversation in her head. "I know a lot of people, Wade, but they're just tourists — they all leave." She waits for Wade to answer. He doesn't. She adds, "And now you're leaving me too."

Wade sets down his cup with the now shredded sleeve. "Your

leg... I thought, well assumed, it was a ski accident."

"It wasn't."

"I'm sorry."

"I'm not."

A subtle pain pulses in Martha's leg when she thinks about the crash. The memory is hazy. She remembers the smell of booze, the sound of laughter, the red and blue lights, and the cold air. Did it snow that night?

An employee at Bath & Body Works slides the metal gate across the entrance. The stores will be closing soon.

"I'm not going to abandon you, Martha," says Wade. He puts an arm around her in a sideways hug. For a brief moment she allows herself to lean into him.

A vague heaviness settles in Wade's legs and in the space under his eyes. He realizes that he is terrified. What if the world doesn't end?

Martha pulls away and Wade lets his arm fall to his side. "What happens now?" he says.

Martha reaches for her crutches. "I should catch my bus."

"Please let me drive you," says Wade. Martha stands.

"Not yet."

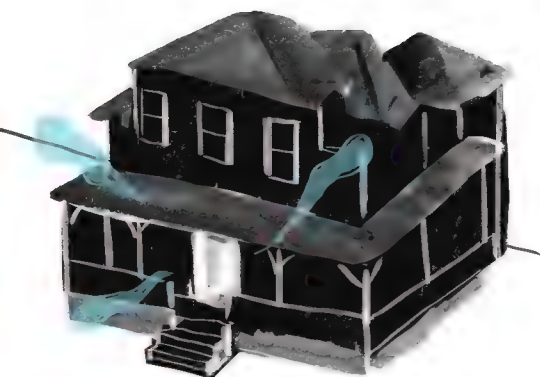
Wade stands, collects the empty coffee cups, and tosses them in the trash. "Do you want to talk about it?"

"Not yet."

An unfamiliar awkwardness hovers between them. "Same time next week?" asks Wade.

The mall is quieter now. The elderly couple Martha saw earlier walks by in the other direction. They are not carrying any shopping bags.

"If the world's still here," says Martha.



SUV. He told me the security company called once every hour to make sure he wasn't sleeping on the job.

We headed first to the house where I worked. The constable I played was known to be a heavy drinker. He was also suspected of physically abusing his family.

We parked in front of the house and I opened the door before Amin arrived with the flashlight. It was pitch black inside the constable's office. I felt around the desk and accidentally knocked over a small ink pot. I felt around on the desk but I couldn't find it. The house creaked its familiar creak, but it was sharper, a little more intense. It was easy to see why all the employees thought their houses were haunted.

Amin arrived with the flashlight. We inspected the 3x6 foot holding cell beside the desk. Nothing but the old honey bucket.

We went into the kitchen. The house was much more sinister in the dark as Amin shined the flashlight on individual objects, projecting their shadowy edges onto the wall behind them.

We went into the front room. It was cold. Our footsteps were the only sounds. The chairs and china were in the right places, but the lid on the piano was open. It shouldn't have been open in the winter. I remembered how I always forgot small stuff like that while cleaning the building when the house was mine. I went to look in the mirror.

Suddenly, glass smashed behind us. I froze.

"Holy fucking shit," whispered Amin. "That came from the office."

"What did you do?" I asked.

"Nothing."

I went back into the office.

"Come with the flashlight."

The small ink pot had fallen on the floor, splattering ink everywhere.

"I just knocked it over when I came in," I told Amin. "It just rolled off the desk."

The small jar had dropped from the desk a few times before, but it had never broken.

"Let's get out of here," I said.

We got back into the SUV without a word. It started after a couple twists of the key. Amin was obviously distraught.

We drove along the path between the office and the Hawreliak house, when I heard something.

"Shh," I said.

"What?"

"Stop the car."

"No, man."

"Shut the car off."

He did. I heard the shrill ring of a telephone in the distance.

"When's the last time the security company called?"

"They only call me on my cell," he said, showing it to me.

I listened again.

"Did you hear that?"

"What?"

There was nothing.

"Freaky shit," I said.

"Yeah freaky shit. Let's go back now," said Amin.

"Not yet. I want to go in the Hawreliak house."

"No frickin way man," Amin said.

I pulled out the red football jersey.

His eyes widened. "Holy shit. How much did you pay for that?"

"It doesn't matter."

"Why are you doing this to me?"

"Don't be scared. I got this for you so I can go inside. You don't have to come."

"Please don't go in man."

"Sorry," I said, grabbing the flashlight.

He followed me. I had the key, and as other employees told me I had to do, I asked the mother for permission to open the door. It unlocked easily.

In the summer, there was always food on the long table in the kitchen. Now it was bare. I shined the light on the stove, the wall telephone, the cradle. Nothing unusual.

Amin arrived breathing quickly. He held resolutely onto the doorknob. I walked into the different rooms, listening for a few moments.

"Finished?" Amin interrupted.

"I need to go upstairs."

"Why?"

"Because you don't do your job."

"Come one man," he implored. "Fuck this, let's get out of here."

I slowly, carefully climbed the stairs. Some creaked. All the doors of the rooms upstairs were open. It was all dark to the end of the hallway; I couldn't see anything. I went inside the first bedroom.

The bed was made immaculately. Clothes were nicely laid out; small, brown shoes ready to wear.

"Holy fucking shit!" Amin screamed from the bottom floor. I turned to the door, but I heard footsteps running down the hallway and the door slammed in front of my face. I jerked and tugged the doorknob and hammered the door. It wouldn't open.

I was only told later that the mother didn't like swearing in her house.



HOW TO BE A BETTER ALLY

BY KATE BLACK

Ever since pre-school, we've learned to walk a mile in our neighbours' shoes. But how can we effectively support someone's situation that we've never experienced ourselves?

An ally is a person who wants to fight for the rights of a marginalized group that they're not a member of. But being an ally isn't as simple as updating your Twitter bio — it's an ongoing process of self-education and hard work. Here are some handy tips on how to be an active supporter of a community.

CHECK YOUR PRIVILEGE.

No, seriously. Having privilege means that there are some things that you'll never have to experience in life simply because of who you are. Your gender identity, your social class or the colour of your skin, for example, may afford you easiness in some situations, while those characteristics may detriment others. And just because parts of your identity are privileged doesn't mean that you don't face hardships in other parts of your life.

It's natural to feel defensive once you confront your privilege. Remember, though, that privilege is not inherently bad, but how you act on it can be. You can use your place in society to support those in a different situation.

COMMUNITY COMES FIRST.

Melissa Fabrizio, Communications & Events Coordinator of the U of A's Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services, says that while there's many personal reasons to becoming an ally, the community's needs should come before your own: "It's not about you. It's about the community."

STRIVE FOR SELF-BETTERMENT.

Acknowledge that being an ally is a constant process — declaring that you're an ally isn't enough. There's always room for growth!

According to Vernon Wall, in *Beyond Tolerance*, allies go through a process of "coming out," similar to the process that those who identify as LGBTQ may go through. The Riddle Homophobia Scale categorizes this transition into eight broad stages: repulsion, pity, tolerance, acceptance, support, admiration, appreciation and nurturance.

This process may begin with the "repulsion" phase, where the individual sees the group in question as a "crime against nature." This process eventually resolves in the "nurturance" phase, where the individual assumes the group in question is an "indispensible" part of society.

INTERRUPTING OPPRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR.

Actively joining in on, or having no response to an oppressive behaviour — like a joke made at a marginalized group's expense — only works against inclusion. Mary McClintock, in "How to Interrupt Oppressive Behavior," suggests voicing your disapproval along with educating people, like saying "That's not really funny because it's like saying LGBTQ people aren't worthy of real respect." Further, McClintock suggests initiating your own, or supporting others' proactive responses to reducing oppression. This could mean anything from directing offensive joke-tellers to a helpful website, or planning a relevant workshop for your student group.

RECOGNIZE WHEN YOU'VE MADE A MISTAKE...

...and acknowledge that making mistakes is okay — just make a commitment to be better in the future.

YouTube blogger Chescaleigh stresses the importance of impact over intent in her video "Getting Called Out: How to Apologize": "It doesn't matter what you meant. What matters is the outcome of what you said or what you did."

Chescaleigh offers some solid advice on how to apologize, too:

- **Bad apologies:** Avoid saying things along the line of "Sorry that you were offended" because you're placing the blame on the person who was offended.
- **Good apologies:** Take responsibility for what you've done, and make a commitment to change that behaviour. If you want, throw in a "thank you." It can be scary to call someone out.

EDUCATE YOURSELF.

It isn't the responsibility of the community you're allying to educate you. Take initiative to constantly deepen your knowledge to educate yourself and others. Stay up-to-date on the news affecting the community and get your news from a variety of sources — and even better, read material written by members of the community itself. Knowledge is power!

RESOURCES FOR ALLIES:

- **Shrub Blog Resources on Privilege:** blog.shrub.com/check-my-what
- **Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services:** ismss.ualberta.ca
- **Chescaleigh YouTube channel:** youtube.com/user/chescaleigh
- **The Anti-Oppression Network:** theantioppressionnetwork.wordpress.com

QUICK TIPS:

- Don't assume everyone you meet is heterosexual, able-bodied or of a certain ethnic or socioeconomic background based on their appearance. Likewise, don't be surprised if someone "comes out" to you.
- Avoid phrases like "this is my gay best friend" — humans aren't accessories.
- Treat everyone as a unique individual. Although people may be a part of the same marginalized group, all individuals come from diverse backgrounds and all experience their privileges and oppressions differently.

WORDS OF WISDOM “WHAT DO YOU KNOW TO BE TRUE?”

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JESSICA HONG

Douglas Stewart

ENTREPRENEUR



“While our time is limited, the number of tries we can take rarely is.”

Jessica Nguyen

STUDENT



“I’ll let you know when I figure it out. In the meantime, the search continues.”

Craig Martell

COMEDIAN



“If you live a well-rounded life, you’ll find drugs, fucking lots of people and money aren’t all that important.”

Yvette Thompson

YOGA INSTRUCTOR



“Vulnerability, gratitude, contentment and presence are the secret ingredients for happiness.”

Doug Hoyer

MUSICIAN



“The only truth that I know is that I know nothing.”

Amy Shostak

IMPROVISER



“If I am scared, I should do it.”



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